

Message Text

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ACTION PER-03

INFO OCT-01 SCA-01 ISO-00 /005 W
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R 041841Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 37
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

UNCLAS BOGOTA 7318

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: APER CASC
SUBJECT: CONSULAR STAFFING

REF: A. BUENOS AIRES 5170
B. BOGOTA 6820
C. BOGOTA AIRGRAM A-90 OF JULY 24 1975

FOR SCA ADMIN WALENTINOWYZ AND PER/CA /FS FROM
AMBASSADOR

1. SCA IS AWARE OF SERIOUS SITUATION EXISTING IN COLOMBIA
RE PROTECTION SERVICE FOR INCREASING NUMBER OF AMCITS
ARRESTED AND DETAINED HERE. DURING MY RECENT CONSULTATION

IN DEPARTMENTN SCA STRESSED TO ME THE SERIOUSNESS WITH
WHICH DEPARTMENT VIEWS SITUATION HERE AND THE FACT THAT
CONGRESSIONAL SPOTLIGHT WAS ON COLOMBIA AFTER MEXICO IN
THIS REGARD. REF C ASSESSED THE SITUATION HERE AND
REQUESTED ADDITIONAL CONS STAFFING ASAP FOR THIS PURPOSE,
THE ELEMENTS OF WHICH I HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED WITH
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR SCA.

2. IN THE LIGHT OF ALL THIS IT IS SURPRISING AND
DISMAYING THAT VICE CONSUL WHITMAN, CURRENTLY THE
ONLY OFFICER ASSIGNED PROTECTION AND WELFARE WORK,
HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO BUENOS AIRES WITH A REQUESTED
ETD OF MID-SEPT WITHOUT--AS WE UNDERSTAND IT--
A REPLACEMENT EVEN BEING NAMED AS YET, MUCH LESS AN
ETA FOR BOGOTA BEING IN SIGHT.

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3. AS WE POINTED OUT IN REF B, THIS POST CANNOT RELEASE WHITMAN WITHOUT ANYONE IN SIGHT TO REPLACE HIM. WE CANNOT MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS AMONG AN ALREADY OVER-TAXED STAFF TO ABSORB THE GAP BEYOND A WEEK OR SO. A GAP IN THIS POSITION WILL THEREFORE VERY SERIOUSLY LIMIT OUR CAPACITY TO PROVIDE MINIMUM ESSENTIAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES--THE DEMAND FOR WHICH AS YOU KNOW IS RISING FAST--IN THIS HIGHLY SENSITIVE AREA OF AMCITS ARRESTED IN THE BOGOTA CONSULAR DISTRICT. THIS IS EXPECIALLY TRUE IN THE FACE OF PLANS TO MOUNT NEW AND MAJOR NARCOTICS INTERDICTION EFFORTS BY GOC AND USG IN THE PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AHEAD.

4. RE FA REPORTED BUENOS AIRES BELIEF THAT IT TOO COULD NOT ABSORB A GAP IN THE POSITION TO WHICH WHITMAN IS ASSIGNED. I AM SURE THIS IS A CORRECT ASSESSMENT. THERE IS NO VIRTUE IN THE TWO POSTS TRYING TO DEBATE RELATIVE ABILITIES OR INABILITIES TO ABSORB GAPS. ON ONE (INCLUDING MR WELTER) IS IN A POSITION TO JUDGE THE OTHER'S REQUIREMENTS, AND WE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO. THE DEPARTMENT MUST THEREFORE FACE THIS SERIOUS SITUATION WITH SOME RATIONALITY. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION CANNOT TAKE PLACE WITHOUT SOME REFERENCE TO THE SERIOUS SUBSTANTIVE REALITIES AND REQUIREMENTS WHICH IT IS SUPPOSED TO SERVE.

5. THE OPTIONS WOULD APPEAR TO BE A) GET US A REPLACEMENT WHO CAN ARRIVE ON OR BEFORE SEPT 20 SO THAT WE CAN RELEASE WHITMAN; B) ASSIGN SOMEONE ELSE TO BUENOS AIRES WHO CAN MEET THAT POST'S SCHEDULE NEEDS OR C) PROVIDE A QUALIFIED TDY OFFICER TO BUENOS AIRES OR BOGOTA WHO CAN SERVE UNTIL PERMANENT CHANGES ARE EFFECTED. PLEASE ADVISE.

VAKY

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